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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education activities in carrying out its function of institutional accreditation in the North Central region over a 2-year period. Commission activities discussed include accrediting activities, self-study institutes and workshops, consultant-evaluator conferences, and consultant-evaluator associates program. Issues of interest include collective bargaining, the accreditation of institutions offering occupational education programs, and evaluation of foreign study programs. Policies and procedures of primary concern to the commission include restructuring of the North Central Association and procedures of the commission. (MJM)

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NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT 1972-1973

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The *Annual Report 1972-1973* is the third annual report published by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The first report, for 1970, in addition to presenting an account of the major activities for the year, traces the development of the policies and procedures that reflect the Commission's attempt to respond effectively to the demand for maintenance of quality in higher education. Included in the 1971 report are policy statements and position papers adopted by the Executive Board of the Commission that reflect their concern with the nature of the academic enterprise and the relationship of accreditation to new developments in higher education.

The current report summarizes the Commission's activities in carrying out its function of institutional accreditation in the North Central region over a two-year period. At the end of 1973, this 19-state area includes 677 accredited institutions of higher education and 159 institutions listed as candidates for accreditation. This compares with 605 accredited institutions and 149 institutions holding a preaccredited status at the close of 1971. Official listings of accredited institutions and candidates for accreditation appear in the summer issue of the *North Central Association Quarterly*.

In a continuing effort to convey to institutions and interested publics the Commission's concern with significant forces and movements influencing the role of postsecondary education in our time, this report presents a review of changes that have evolved in institutional accrediting in response to a changing system of higher education over the past several decades. It also includes the policy statements and position papers that have evolved most recently as the Commission seeks to meet its ongoing commitment and responsibility to adapt to the challenges of change.

FOREWORD
(continued)

This publication of a biennial report does not represent a change in practice but is rather a result of particular circumstances that prevented preparation of separate reports for 1972 and 1973. A return to annual reporting in 1974 is anticipated.

Our appreciation is extended to all those who have contributed so generously of their time and effort to the work of the Commission.

Robert Clodius
Chairman

Norman Burns
Director of the Commission

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INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is one of three constituent Commissions of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, a voluntary accrediting agency with a history dating to 1895. The other major components of the Association are the Commission on Secondary Schools and the Commission on Research and Service.

The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is responsible for the establishment of criteria for the evaluation of institutions of higher education, for aiding interested institutions in attaining membership in the Association, for assisting member institutions in the improvement and the extension of their programs, for the conduct of workshops for consultants and evaluators, and for the study of matters of common concern to postsecondary institutions.

Today, the activities of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education are coordinated with those of similar commissions of the other five regional accrediting agencies[1] through the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE).

In the report that follows, the specific role and activities of the Commission and the Federation are considered in greater detail. To help place them within the total context of institutional accreditation, however, the initial statement presents an overview of accreditation as it has evolved in response to change, as it exists today, and as it serves as a reference point for the future.

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[1] New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITING: ITS RESPONSE TO AN EVOLVING SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

The Meaning of General Accrediting

Though accredited status is widely recognized as some sort of desirable badge of approval for institutions to have, there is relatively little understanding of what institutional accrediting is really about. Perhaps it can best be described as an activity carried on by educational institutions themselves, voluntarily joined together in an organization that has for its purpose the identification, preservation, and advancement of quality in education. Membership in the organization is open only to institutions accredited by the organization; that is, those that meet its standards. The standards to be employed and the policies and procedures of the organization are determined by legislative groups composed of representatives of the member institutions.

A prestige factor has come to be attached to institutional accrediting, generally giving the accredited institution a position of higher status than the unaccredited institution. Accredited status attracts students, faculty, and financial support and smooths the paths of students transferring to other institutions as well as graduates seeking employment. For membership in some educational associations, it is a prerequisite. The endorsement of the accrediting agency facilitates the granting of funds by the federal government and frequently by other agencies as well.

The Origin of Accrediting

The accrediting movement began in the early days of the United States Bureau of Education, established in 1867.

As one of its tasks in fulfilling the assignment of summarizing the educational activities of the country, the Bureau was to publish a list of collegiate institutions. But, first, it was necessary to define a collegiate institution, which the Bureau did in this way: "A collegiate institution is one authorized to give degrees and which reports college students in attendance." The Bureau published its first listing of 369 institutions meeting this definition in 1870. This effort to define a college would appear to represent the beginnings of standardization and the germ of the accrediting movement.

Other agencies became concerned with the definition of a college for their own specific purposes. For example, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, in establishing a system of retirement allowances for faculty members in institutions of higher education, adopted a definition that included these provisions: no less than $200,000 of productive endowment, at least six chairs of instruction, and requirements of four years of college preparation for admission and 120 semester hours for graduation.

Defining the characteristics of a college was prerequisite to devising some means for distinguishing between those colleges that were of satisfactory quality and those that were not. There was need for this, for, although the responsibility for the control of education was reserved for the states, most states assumed little or no regulatory authority. Perhaps because in our early history higher education was left mainly to private, and especially church, initiative, most of the states were very lenient in granting charters to higher institutions, giving them wide latitude in the conduct of their work. Legal authority to grant degrees conferred by the state offered little, if any, assurance that the institution was a good institution or even that it was reputable. There was great variation among educational institutions in quality and in structure.

In an effort to bring some order out of the disorder, which existed in much the same way at the secondary school level, regionally organized associations of schools and colleges began to emerge toward the turn of the century. What is now the New England Association of Schools and Colleges was first on the scene, followed shortly by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges were formed later.

The standards to which institutions were expected to conform as a condition for membership in the accrediting commissions were stated largely in quantitative terms, spelling out the specifics relating to characteristics of the institutional structure—the faculty, the curriculum, the library, the physical plant, and finance.

Criticism of Standarization

In its time, the use of standards contributed measurably to the ordering of higher education and hence to its general improvement. In the early years of this century, however, the situation began to change rapidly. Collegiate education was expanding at an accelerated pace. In response to growing demands for more and new types of educational programs, new institutions were appearing on the scene and existing institutions were extending the scope of their activities. As higher education attempted to meet the new and expanding needs, the charge was made with increasing frequency, even by those who recognized the value of accrediting, that the inflexible application of standards to institutions was stifling legitimate experimentation.

The accrediting movement responded by adopting a new approach to accrediting. The concept of standardization was replaced by the principle of institutional individuality, which held that institutions properly differed in definition of purpose and in the means employed in attaining the desired ends. Further, an institution was no longer to be denied accreditation because of failure to meet one or more of these standards; rather, it was to be judged in terms of the total pattern it presented—elements of strength to be weighed against elements of weakness. Under the new approach, quantitative data continued to be used as a partial basis for accrediting decisions, but they were used as norms, as guidelines, rather than as minimum standards. It was recognized that there is no good substitute for informed professional judgment as a basis for accrediting decisions. Many of the important characteristics of a good educational operation simply do not lend themselves to quantification.

Accrediting Continues to Change

Changes in accreditation, as in other institutions serving society, have continued at an accelerating rate in response to rapidly changing demands. There has been tremendous expansion in the higher education enterprise, particularly since the close of World War II. The junior-community college movement has grown at a bewilderingly rapid rate. Existing institutions, particularly state institutions, have been opening new off-campus centers and expanding established centers. There has been a growing emphasis on semiprofessional-technical-vocational educational programs to meet the requirements of our expanding technology. Many state colleges have been moving to the university level with professional and graduate programs. The expansion of facilities and programs has been augmented, of course, by the provision of federal funds in substantial amounts.

If expansion takes place at the expense of quality, the individual and society are poorly served, and maintenance of quality is the concern of the accrediting agency. To meet the growing responsibility brought by change, institutional accrediting agencies have found it necessary to broaden the range of their concerns.

For example, the comprehensive community college with broadly ranging offerings in liberal arts, professional, semi-professional, and vocational-technical programs, some leading to degrees and some not, presents certain problems of evaluation that are not faced in evaluating the more traditional institutions of higher education.

Multiple campus developments cannot be evaluated in quite the same way as an institution existing entirely at a single location. To deal with this particular kind of problem, a policy has been developed that permits off-campus units of an institution to be accredited separately under certain conditions.

Some particular problems are presented by the so-called developing universities, which are extending their offerings to include professional and graduate schools. Such developing institutions are frequently under pressure of various sorts, internal and external, to move somewhat faster than wisdom might dictate. It is the responsibility of the accrediting association to provide a countervailing force that will check unwise expansion and thus permit the institution to build real quality into its expanded programs.

Now, in the light of new developments in higher education, the accrediting association also faces further modification in means and methods of evaluation. Until very recently, higher education's response to emerging social needs consisted largely of modification and elaboration of more or less traditional institutional structures—a physical plant and facilities

designed solely for educational purposes, a resident faculty possessing the usual academic credentials, an organized curriculum and instructional program in which "credits" for residence and class attendance on an organized basis were earned. Now we are witnessing developments that virtually abandon the traditional institutional forms. A new and broader base for education is emerging. The distinction between formal education, for which "credit" is given, and informal education, which carries no external reward, is breaking down. Through a variety of means students are earning credit for informal, nonstructured, and frequently self-guided educational experiences. "External" degrees are being conferred in recognition of competence demonstrated by examination. Educational institutions collaborate with each other and with noneducational agencies to provide a wide range of significant experiences leading to degrees.

So, once again, educational change is demanding corresponding change in accrediting procedures and methods. No longer able to rely heavily on its traditional measuring sticks relating to structure and form, the accrediting agency must develop new methods of measuring the quality of learning experiences available outside of the traditional institutional arrangements of faculty, administration, library, and physical facilities. To a greater extent than in the past, the new approach must rely on direct evaluation of educational outcomes and on evaluation of learning experiences, resources, and governance in terms of desired outcomes. Tentative plans for the new approach to institutional evaluation are set forth in the statement, "The Need for New Techniques for Evaluation."[2]

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[2] The statement was published in the *Annual Report 1971* of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Copies are also available from the Commission office.

Cooperation Among the Institutional Accrediting Commissions

One of the most significant developments in the accrediting movement is the growing cooperation among the regional accrediting commissions. The need for cooperation was first recognized formally in 1949 when the National Committee of Regional Accrediting Agencies was organized. Through the National Committee, representatives of the six regional commissions on higher education had opportunities to discuss accrediting policies and practices periodically with a view to promoting greater efficiency, or at least greater consistency, among the regions.

For many years, the National Committee served also as a useful forum for the discussion of other matters of common concern. But it was not sufficient to meet present-day requirements for general, institutional accrediting. The fact is that the concept of regionalism is not as significant today as it once was. There is a general trend in the conduct of human affairs toward centralization of power and authority, and education is no exception. Agencies of the federal government are spending large sums in support of educational programs and research, and in support of students. Philanthropic foundations operating at the national and international levels are having a tremendous impact on education. As technology advances and specialization grows, the interdependence of the various segments of society increases. Increased speed and ease of communication and transportation tend to break down sectional and regional lines.

Correspondingly, our concerns as a people must increasingly be viewed nationally and internationally. Fewer and fewer concerns will be seen as problems to be dealt with in small geographic units.

In these times, the accrediting agency is called upon to extend the range of its activities. In the early days of general institutional accrediting, accredited status served mainly to facilitate the transfer of credits. Accreditation today has come

to be a condition for participating in a great variety of activities, not the least of which are the funding programs of the federal government. As the major agency in our society for the evaluation of educational institutions, it is the accrediting agency whose assistance is sought when questions of institutional quality are raised. And, when a fund-granting agency seeks assurance that an institution in which it is investing is of acceptable quality, it is from the accrediting agency that such assurance is sought.

Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education

Faced with these developments, the regional accrediting associations have found it necessary to create a single locus of responsibility for general institutional accrediting—to create a voice that can speak for the regional commissions at the national level on matters of common concern. To this end, the commissions on higher education of the six regional accrediting associations organized the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education in 1964. A Council, representative of the constituent commissions, was created to serve as the policy and decision-making body. The Council has made considerable progress in reaching agreement on policies and procedures; however, there is still a long way to go.

Recognizing the need for an Executive Director to represent it in the educational councils of the nation and at conferences with agencies of the federal government and other educational and professional organizations that deal with matters involving or related to accrediting, the Federation in 1967 established the office on a part-time basis.

In 1970, a study group under the sponsorship of the Federation Council made a comprehensive study of institutional accrediting. Their major recommendation was for a greatly strengthened Federation, and this recommendation has been followed. The regional commissions on higher education and the associations of which they are a part have adopted a

set of bylaws that strengthen the Federation by giving it the authority to formulate a set of common principles, common policies, and general procedures for the constituent accrediting commissions and to review and coordinate the activities of the commissions to assure consistency with these principles. The regional commissions will continue to carry on the accrediting activities but under policies determined by the Federation rather than by the individual commissions.

In September 1972, the Federation set up an office in Washington with a full-time Executive Director.

Toward Further Coordination in Accrediting

In 1949, the National Commission on Accrediting was created by the presidents of institutions of higher education for the purposes of checking the proliferation of specialized, programmatic accrediting agencies, working for the elimination of accrediting practices detrimental to the interests of institutions, and improving in general the accrediting situation in the public interest.

The Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions has maintained close liaison with the National Commission on Accrediting. Recently, there have been conversations looking toward the possible formation of an overall structure for the further coordination of voluntary accrediting. Clearly, the creation of such a structure is a logical step in the further development of voluntary accrediting, and a number of professional accrediting organizations have expressed strong interest in participating. The form that the organization might take cannot be predicted at this time, however.

The Public Interest in Accrediting

The history of voluntary institutional accrediting offers convincing evidence that it has been an effective force in American higher education for many years. In its early days, it brought a much needed measure of order to the field. It has

played an important part in fostering equality in higher education. It has assisted institutions in a variety of ways, not the least of which is supporting their efforts to resist those forces that, to advance special interests, would divert the institutions from their essential business of seeking and disseminating truth. It has contributed to the preservation of institutional individuality through the policy of evaluating in terms of the purposes the institution espouses.

In protecting and advancing the interests of quality higher education, institutional accrediting has always served and will continue to serve the public interest. Accrediting has grown in importance as higher education has come to touch the lives of more people in more ways, and the public interest in accrediting has grown commensurately. Indeed, this growth in public interest has reached the point where it is highly desirable to have direct representation of the public on the policy-making bodies in accrediting. Accordingly, the operating commissions and the newly reorganized Federation are modifying their arrangements for control in such a way as to include substantial direct participation by representatives of the public in voluntary accrediting.

A Look Ahead

One of the basic assumptions of our society is that the public interest is best served through the interplay of forces on the part of groups and of individuals operating in an atmosphere of relative freedom to pursue their own ends within certain limitations imposed by the public through laws and regulations. In this sense, all social institutions, including higher education and accrediting, must serve society and be modified as conditions change.

The history of voluntary accrediting strongly indicates a flexibility and willingness to change as the situation in which it operates changes. So long as this continues to be true, its effectiveness as a force in the advancement of the public good will continue.

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

The primary task of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is to foster and maintain the quality of the higher educational, postsecondary enterprise through the accreditation process. The Commission fully supports and subscribes to the purposes of accreditation set forth by the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education as follows:

> fostering excellence in postsecondary education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness;
>
> encouraging institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;
>
> assuring the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution has clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so;
>
> providing counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions;
>
> protecting institutions against encroachments which might jeopardize their educational effectiveness or academic freedom.

To carry out its task effectively, the Commission must both assume responsibility for informing the public adequately with regard to postsecondary institutions and ensure the implementation of a successful program of institutional evaluation that encompasses on-site visits, due-process procedures, and training and education in evaluation processes. It is to the performance of these services that the major activities of the Commission are directed.

Accrediting Activities

In the fall of 1971 and spring of 1972, 191 institutions were evaluated for review at the 1972 spring and summer meetings of the Commission. In fall 1972 and spring 1973, 167 institutions were evaluated for review at the Commission's 1973 meetings. The statuses applied for and the actions taken are summarized in Table I.

Following the summer 1973 meeting, the Commission, in accordance with a policy adopted by the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education, formally dropped the categories of Correspondent of the Commission and Recognized Candidate for Accreditation and instituted a single affiliate status, Candidate for Accreditation. All institutions formerly holding the statuses of Correspondent of the Commission and Recognized Candidate for Accreditation are listed as Candidates for Accreditation in the summer 1973 issue of the *North Central Association Quarterly*.

Self-Study Institutes and Workshops

In February of 1972 and 1973, the Commission sponsored annual self-study institutes in Chicago to which representatives of institutions scheduled for evaluation visits within the next several years were invited. The objectives of the institutes were to provide information on self-study techniques and the nature of on-site evaluation visits and to give institutional representatives and the Commission staff an opportunity to share directly their ideas with regard to expectations for membership and institutional concerns.

During the two-year period, similar one-day, drive-in workshops were held in Denver, Colorado, Phoenix, Arizona, Columbus, Nebraska, and Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

TABLE I.

Accrediting Actions of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education: 1972-1973

	TYPE OF EVALUATION*								TOTAL
	Periodic Membership Review	Early Re-evaluation	Correspondent	Recognized Candidate for Accreditation	Initial Membership	Operationally Separate	Transfer of Accreditation	Preliminary and Extension of Preliminary Accreditation	
1972									
Institutions Reviewed	24	35	22	31	28	13	6	32	191
Approved									
Without conditions	18	12	21	28	7	5	3	24	118
With conditions	6	22	0	2	18	7	3	4	62
Denied	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	3	9
Action deferred	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
1973									
Institutions Reviewed	22	33	8	31	27	12	2	32	167
Approved									
Without conditions	16	9	7	29	15	8	1	14	99
With conditions	6	24	1	2	9	3	1	16	62
Denied	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	4
Action deferred	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2

*Statuses are described in program documents available from the Office of the Commission.

Consultant-Evaluator Conferences

The focus of the education and training program for consultants and evaluators who participate in the Commission's accrediting activities is on the consultant-evaluator conferences, which have been held twice yearly, in fall and spring.

The conferences provide a means of direct communication between the staff and members of the consultant-evaluator corps on the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Commission. They also serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of problems in higher education as they relate to accreditation. Some conference programs emphasize topics of special interest or concern to the particular subgroup of the consultant-evaluator corps attending. Participants in the four 1972-1973 conferences considered such matters as collective bargaining, the hidden agenda of the evaluator, the role of the evaluating team chairman, and developments in the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education.

Consultant-Evaluator Associates Program

Approximately 80 new consultant-evaluator associates were selected in 1972 and again in 1973 to take part in a one-year orientation and training program preparatory to full participation in the consulting and evaluating activities of the Commission.

The year begins in September with an orientation conference, when new associates are introduced to the Commission's philosophy, policies and procedures, and methods of evaluation. Under the guidance of experienced chairmen, they then serve on an average of three on-site evaluation teams. At the spring meeting of the Commission, they have an opportunity to observe the deliberations of reviewing committees considering institutional accrediting actions and to review as a group the year's experiences.

ISSUES OF INTEREST

Collective Bargaining

One of the major forces emerging in institutions served by the North Central Association today is collective bargaining. As collective bargaining methods have become of increasing concern in setting the parameters of faculty-administrative relationships, the Commission has sought to focus more sharply on the effects of collective bargaining on the on-site evaluation process. Attention has been given to the topic in consultant-evaluator conferences over the past few years. A major portion of the fall 1972 conference was devoted to this factor, when papers related to it were presented by Bernard Mintz, Executive Vice President of Baruch College of the City University of New York, and Ray A. Howe, Deputy Assistant to the Superintendent of the Dearborn, Michigan, Public Schools.[3]

After much discussion of experiences in the several regional accrediting associations, the executive secretaries and directors of the regional commissions recommended the following statement to the Council of the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education for adoption. At this time, the statement is up for debate by FRACHE.

Draft Statement on Accreditation and Collective Bargaining

> The decision to enter into a collective bargaining arrangement is primarily institutional, usually governed by state laws in the case of public institutions, and federal laws or other factors in private institutions. The regional institutional accrediting commissions take no position with respect to these decisions. However, they are appropriately concerned about the impact of such arrangements on the quality and effectiveness of educational institutions. In

[3] Mr. Howe's paper, "Collective Bargaining and Accreditation in Higher Education: An Examiner's Point of View," appears in the winter 1973 issue of the *North Central Association Quarterly*.

that context, the regional commissions need to be fully apprised of current developments with respect to contracts entered into by accredited or candidate institutions. When an institution having a collective bargaining agreement is to be evaluated, a copy of the contract should be included among the documents supplied to the accrediting commission and the evaluation team. The team members will be expected to refrain from comment on the terms of a contract except as they affect fulfillment of an institution's purpose and objectives.

Under no circumstances will a regional commission serve as an arbiter or otherwise become involved in collective bargaining activities. In scheduling evaluation visits, periods when contract negotiations are in process will be avoided, if possible. Prolonged interruption of an institution's instructional program will be a matter of serious concern to the regional accrediting commission.

The Commission recognizes that its interest in conditions of faculty service, faculty-administrative relationships, and student relationships as they pertain to the whole area of institutional governance will not be diminished by the fact that collective bargaining exists but, rather, that it must be prepared to give increasing attention to the effects of collective bargaining on an institution's accredited status. Through its accrediting decisions, the Commission will continue to attempt to reinforce the concept of cooperation and seek to have those values prevail that will prove ultimately to enhance the quality of the educational enterprise and enable it to move forward in defining and accomplishing its mission in a responsible manner.

The Accreditation of Institutions Offering Occupational Education Programs: A Status Report

In 1969, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education abolished the requirement that an institution be chartered as a degree-granting institution for membership in the North Central Association. Thus, eligibility for membership was opened up to a wider variety of postsecondary institutions, particularly those in the occupational or career sector.

Before moving in this direction, the Executive Board of the Commission met with state representatives of occupational education to discuss various alternatives. Among the possibilities were 1) establishment of a separate commission on occupational education within the framework of the North Central Association; 2) establishment, with assistance from the Commission, of a totally separate accrediting agency; 3) affiliation with another agency of vocational or occupational education, such as the American Vocational Association. An advisory committee to the National Commission on Accrediting had been formed earlier, but the efforts of this group to establish some independent agency concerned with occupational education accreditation came to naught.

The major considerations entering into the discussions of the Board and state representatives were development of the peer evaluation system, revision of the traditional nature and role of general education in the curriculum, and changes in the role traditionally exercised by the Commission.

From the Commission's point of view, bringing the exercise of responsibilities in the postsecondary spectrum within one framework seemed desirable, even though some strains were bound to be introduced at the outset and some of the usual practices inherent in the more traditionally accredited institutions had to be not only stretched but revised. Furthermore,

the separation into institutional streams appeared to the Commission to be undesirable. From the standpoint of the representatives of occupational education, being in a more or less articulated framework appeared to be feasible. Advantages otherwise unavailable would in fact accrue.

Fortunately, the Commission had gained experience with the accreditation of degree-granting technical institutes as early as 1959, when the Milwaukee Institute of Technology, now the Milwaukee Area Technical College, was accredited. In 1969, it was followed by the Madison Area Technical College. Concomitantly, occupational education was considered to be one of the major components of the community colleges, and in the period of the 50's and 60's, a mushrooming development was seen in the North Central Association area.

To consider the application of evaluative guidelines to occupational education, a vocational-technical education committee advisory to the Executive Board of the Commission was formed and an interim statement adopted. The Commission also cooperated with and contributed to the study committee of the American Vocational Association on evaluation of occupational education.

The number of institutions in the occupational area seeking accreditation has increased rapidly over the past few years. To date, most of the institutions holding membership or candidate for accreditation status are in the states of Wisconsin, Ohio, and Indiana; however, discussions about North Central Association membership are also taking place in other states where career occupational institutions exist separately from community colleges.

In 1973, the first two diploma or certificate schools were accredited by the North Central Association: USAF School of Applied Aerospace Sciences-Lowry, Lowry AFB, Colorado, and USAF School of Applied Aerospace Sciences-Chanute, Chanute Technical Training Center, Illinois.

The development of both occupational education and the so-called non-traditional programs have influenced the North Central Association in moving toward a revision of the *Guide to the Evaluation of Institutions of Higher Education* that will fuse the evaluation principles for all institutions. Further changes will undoubtedly be necessary and desirable in the future as we continue to move into a framework of serving institutions in the postcompulsory education spectrum. The Commission believes that the various segments can work together to serve the needs of contemporary society without denying any of those attributes that have enabled our traditional institutions to provide outstanding services to individuals. Each sector has its unique role to play if the needs of individuals and society are to be met.

The American higher educational system is strong and healthy. Such a system can tolerate some ambiguity and confusion and move forward as it reconciles the past with the vicissitudes of the present.

Evaluation of Foreign Study Programs

During the past decade the number of students from United States institutions of higher education participating in foreign study programs has reached a high level: 32,000 U.S. students were involved in 208 foreign study programs during the academic year 1970-71, according to the Institute of International Education. Involvement of students in study abroad ranges from travel tours and semesters to junior years and graduate study.

Some of these ventures have been fraudulent or approaching the fraudulent—the work of opportunistic promoters whose only interest was in the profits to be derived. But even the programs sponsored by reputable institutions have in some instances been of questionable quality. Removed from the parent institutions, they have not always been subject to adequate direction and supervision. The growth, diversity, and proliferation of these activities have increasingly necessitated some form of effective review and assessment. The Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education has recognized for some time the importance of evaluating study programs abroad sponsored by accredited institutions in the United States. This concern prompted FRACHE to enlist the participation of eleven colleges and universities located within the several accrediting regions in the conduct of a pilot study in the spring of 1972. Locations in Madrid and Strasbourg were selected for on-site evaluation because of the concentration of programs in those cities.

Gordon Sweet, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, was appointed by FRACHE to direct the study with the assistance of Kay J. Andersen, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Dr. Allan O. Pfnister, Professor of Higher Education, University of Denver,

was asked to join Dr. Sweet and Dr. Andersen in planning the evaluation project and was later named chairman of the evaluation team that conducted the on-site visits.

In addition to Dr. Pfnister, the visiting team was composed of the following: Dr. John Elmendorf, President of New College, Sarasota, Florida; Dr. Yvette Fallandy, Provost and Professor of French, California State College at Sonoma, Sonoma, California; Dr. Henry Holland, Professor of Modern Languages, Colby College, Waterville, Maine; Dr. Josephine Sobrino, Professor of Spanish, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. Detailed reports prepared by the committee for each participating institution were sent to the institutions through the executive officer of the appropriate regional accrediting commission. In addition to the individual reports, the team made a number of general observations which applied in varying degrees to the programs visited. Among these observations are the following:

1. Primary Focus of the Study Abroad Programs

As the committee looked at the statements of objectives and purpose of the study programs, they found that these have not always been accurately stated or have not been reviewed since some of the programs were initiated. Publications recruiting study participants are in some cases misleading. Study programs should be evaluated by the institutions to determine if their objectives and the objectives of the students have been met. Colleges should evaluate not only the academic aspects but also the emphasis on the cultural experience derived from study abroad. Student participation in the evaluation process is essential. Publications introducing students to foreign study should be informative and thoroughly describe objectives and purpose, requirements for admission, medical services, costs, travel and living arrangements, courses to be taught, all faculty, names of study directors abroad, and the value of credits awarded.

2. Studying Abroad is Not Generally Studying at a Foreign University

Study programs that depend on faculty or facilities, wholly or in part, in foreign institutions should accurately state these arrangements to participants prior to departure abroad.

3. Admissions and Orientation

A variety of orientation programs were analyzed by the committee. These varied in extent and degree of comprehensiveness and individual orientation on the home campus, orientations on the home campus and on location abroad, or no orientation at all. Comprehensive orientation programs on-site should be conducted to minimize "cultural shock" and shorten the time necessary in adapting to the culture and the student's life-style abroad. An optimum orientation program will assist in the goal of maximum involvement and immersion of participants in the culture. An initial orientation should preferably be conducted on the home campus prior to departure. Components in the orientation programs are language facility and a background in the history and culture of the country to be visited.

4. The Constituent Elements in the Program

Some programs were sound academically with student involvement in the history and culture abroad. Other programs failed to utilize the foreign site and faculty within the instructional program and were "American Outposts" to which faculty, students, and staff were airlifted and deposited.

5. Facilities

Study abroad programs rely heavily on inadequate and poorly arranged libraries in institutions abroad. Some collections of books (dictionaries, encyclopedias, and some other reference works) were available for most of the study programs. A review of the curricula offered abroad indicated that learning resources are needed to support and augment these programs.

6. Continuing Evaluation

Some of the instructional programs were mediocre and were below the standard as advertised and described in brochures or compared with course requirements on the parent campus. Some of the texts were high-school level. Students studying abroad were rightly concerned as to the quality and value of their instruction.

7. Cooperative Endeavors

The cost of study abroad varied. In some programs high tuition resulted in a surplus over expenditures while others trimmed certain phases of the program to balance the budget. A realistic assessment of the fiscal aspects of the programs needs to be made.

8. Evaluation of Student Performance

Considerable confusion exists with regard to grading practices and credit to be received by the participating students.

9. Role of the Field Director

The resident director is the key to a well-structured educational experience for students studying abroad. Language facility, physical and mental capacity, maturity of teaching and administrative experience, sound judgment, and previous foreign study experience are some of the components of a good study director. Probably the greatest weakness is in changing some directors annually so that they are without previous experience in coordinating study abroad programs.

Because of the success of its initial endeavor, the Federation plans a follow-up project to evaluate study abroad programs in Germany. Thereafter, the Federation plans to continue the evaluation of study abroad programs in keeping with the nature of general institutional accreditation. Evaluation of

these programs, which may be requested by an institution or its regional accrediting commission, will be coordinated by FRACHE with the cost to be shared by the participating institutions on an equitable basis.

A more complete report of the pilot evaluation of foreign study programs has been published in the FRACHE document, *Evaluation of Foreign Study Programs, 1973-1974.* This publication is available at $1.00 per copy from the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Restructuring of the North Central Association

Following a careful study of the functions of the North Central Association and its constituent commissions, the Board of Directors of the Association, at its meeting in June 1973, approved a plan for restructuring the organization.

Under the new structure, the two accrediting commissions, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education and the Commission on Secondary Schools, will be given a larger measure of autonomy than they have possessed in the past. The major changes are these:

1) The accrediting authority will be vested in the two commissions subject to review by the Association rather than having action taken *pro forma* by the Association as it has been in the past.

2) The accrediting commissions rather than the Association will have the authority to determine the annual dues paid by member institutions and to adopt and administer their own budgets. Association activities—the Annual Meeting, publications, and the activities of the Commission on Research and Service—will be funded by the two accrediting commissions.

The necessary revisions in the bylaws of the Association have been published in the fall 1973 issue of the *North Central Association Quarterly* and will be submitted to the Association at the Annual Meeting in March 1974.

Procedures of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education*

1. The member institutions of higher education of the Association shall be grouped according to the following geographic districts:

District A—Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia
District B—Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin
District C—Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
District D—Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma
District E—Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming

2. The member institutions of higher education of the Association shall be classified by type. The basis for this classification shall be the highest degree offered by an institution, if any.

3. The members of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, shall be selected from the member institutions by district and by type of institution. The Doctor's degree-granting institutions in each of the five districts shall be entitled to two Commissioners for each ten institutions or major fraction thereof but with a maximum of four Commissioners. The Master's and Specialist's degree-granting institutions, the Bachelor's degree-granting institutions, the Associate degree-granting institutions, and the non-degree-granting institutions in each of the five districts shall be entitled to one Commissioner for each ten institutions or major fraction thereof but with a maximum of four Commissioners. The Commissioners shall serve for four-year terms, one-fourth of the terms expiring each year, and shall be ineligible for reelection until one year has elapsed. At any one time there shall be no more than one Commissioner from any one institution.

*As revised for presentation to the Commission at the 1974 Annual Meeting.

The Commissioners in each district shall suggest persons annually to replace those whose terms have expired in accordance with the formula covering the distribution of Commissioners by type of institution within the district. The suggestions from the districts shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee for the Commission appointed annually by the Executive Board. The Nominating Committee for the Commission shall present its nominations to the Commission at the time of the Annual Meeting of the Association. Election of the Commissioners shall be by the representatives of the member institutions at the Annual Meeting on recommendation of the Commission.

4. The Commission on Secondary Schools shall designate three members of the Commission on Secondary Schools to serve on the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Secondary school members of the Commission shall serve for four-year terms or until expiration of their terms on the Commission on Secondary Schools, whichever is shorter.

5. Determination of institutional status, accredited or preaccredited, shall be made on the basis of on-site evaluations conducted by teams appointed by the staff of the Commission with the authorization of the Executive Board. The reports of the evaluation teams and other relevant materials shall be considered by reviewing committees composed of Commissioners supplemented by experienced evaluators or, in some cases, directly by the Executive Board of the Commission. The reviewing committees shall be set up by the staff of the Commission with the authorization of the Executive Board of the Commission. The actions of the reviewing committees relative to the accredited status of institutions or a preaccredited status shall be in the form of recommendations to the Executive Board.

Each Commissioner shall be assigned to one of the reviewing committees.

The normal expectation is that the expenses of the Commissioners for attendance at the meetings of the Commission will be paid by their institutions.

6. The Executive Board of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education shall be composed of twelve persons who shall be elected by the Commission, plus the Director of the Commission. Except for the Director, all the members shall serve for staggered terms of five years without opportunity for reelection until one year has elapsed. The members of the Executive Board shall be selected with due regard for geographic distribution and institutional type but without specification as to the number from each geographic district or type of institution. All members of the Executive Board shall be members of the Commission. If the Commission term of one of the twelve Board members expires before the expiration of his term on the Board, he shall continue on the Commission as an added member until the expiration of his term on the Executive Board.

It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Board

(a) To consider all reports on the basis of which actions affecting the affiliate or accredited status of institutions may be taken. At the Spring Meeting of the Association, the Executive Board shall make its recommendations for action on such matters to the Commission which, in turn, shall make its recommendations to the Association or to the Board of Directors acting for the Association. At other meetings, the recommendations of the Executive Board, acting for the Commission, shall be made directly to the Board of Directors acting for the Association.

(b) To appoint and consider the reports of *ad hoc* committees before such reports are presented to the Commission for action.

(c) To initiate possible policy changes and consider matters of policy brought to its attention through channels other than *ad hoc* committees before such matters are presented to the Commission.

(d) To initiate and conduct inquiries as needed about member or affiliate institutions.

(e) To carry on all business of the Commission between meetings of the Commission.

The Director of the Commission, elected by the Commission, shall be *ex officio* Secretary of the Executive Board. He shall serve for a three-year term and be eligible for reelection. He shall be *ex officio* a member of the Executive Board with power to vote, and of the Commission.

7. Each member institution of higher education, including units of an institution with separate accreditation, shall designate one person as the official North Central Association representative, and he shall represent his institution at the Annual Meetings of the Association. It is expected that the representative will be the chief administrative officer of the institution or someone designated by him.

8. An institution of higher education holding accredited status or an affiliate status shall not be removed from the status without an on-site evaluation unless it (1) voluntarily withdraws from its relationship with the North Central Association; (2) fails to comply with the requirements of the Commission, such as the payment of dues and fees or the submission of reports; or (3) permanently ceases to operate as an educational institution.

Institutions holding affiliate status shall automatically lose that status upon reaching the end of the term for the status unless action is taken to change its status or grant an extension of its current status.

9. Requests submitted by institutions relative to reconsideration of Association action will be referred by the Executive Secretary of the Association to the Committee on Reconsideration of the Commission. The Committee shall consist of five persons and a maximum of four alternates all to be appointed by the Chairman of the Commission subject to the approval of the Commission for staggered three-year terms. No member of the Committee shall serve concurrently on the Commission or the Board of Directors of the Association. No member of the Committee shall be appointed for more than two consecutive terms.

Requests for reconsideration of decisions of the Association shall be filed with the Executive Secretary of the Association not sooner than ten days and not more than thirty days following the meeting at which the decisions were made and shall represent official action of the governing bodies of the institutions concerned. The basis for such requests for reconsideration shall be alleged bias, injustice, departure from established procedures, or factual error of sufficient magnitude to warrant reconsideration of the decision. Such allegations shall be supported by evidence in writing, submitted by the institution making the request.

Deliberations of the Committee shall be in accordance with procedures set forth in the bylaws of the Association. Actions of the Committee shall be in the form of recommendations to the Board of Directors of the Association.

10. These Procedures may be amended or repealed and new Procedures may be adopted upon recommendation of three-fourths of the Commissioners.